

**DRAFT**

Serial No. 09/801,486

Docket No. 20355-PA

**IN THE SPECIFICATION**

Please amend the specification as follows:

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As shown in FIGS. 5 and 6, the present invention has a first band 18 connected to the neck plate 14 and a second band 20 connected to the opposite end of the neck plate 14. The end of the first band 18, distal from the neck plate 14, has a single means 22 for adjusting and connecting the bands 18, 20 attached thereto. FIGS. 6-9 show the tracheostomy tube of the embodiment of FIG. 6 of the present invention being attached to a patient. The cannula is received in the incision in the patient's throat and the bands 18, 20 are brought around the neck to meet on the side of the patient's neck. The distal end of the second band 20 is threaded through the adjusting means 22 (see arrow FIG. 7) turned back on itself and re-threaded through the adjusting means (see arrow FIG. 8) to retain the tracheostomy tube 10 on the patient's neck and to connect the bands 18, 20. The adjusting

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means 22 shown in FIGS. 6-9 also serves as a connecting means in that by drawing on the distal end of the second band 20 (see arrow FIG. 9) an increased length of the second band 20 is drawn through the adjusting means 22 and the bands are tightened around the patient's neck. In this manner the band is shortened until the patient is comfortable and the tracheostomy tube is retained on the patient. The adjusting means 22 is not limited to the one shown in FIGS. 5-9 but may be any adjusting means 22 known to persons skilled in the art which provides a simple and easily manipulated means to lengthen and shorten at least one of the bands (18, 20). The at least one band need not be formed of two segments but may be an uninterrupted band.

The adjusting means 22 and the connecting means 24 may be separated as shown in FIG. 10. The first band 18, second band 20 and adjusting means 22 are the same as shown in FIGS. 6-9. However, as noted above, the adjusting means 22 is not so limited. A typical connecting means 24 has two releasable interlocking members which are quickly and easily connected and disconnected. Here, also, connecting means 24 known to persons skilled in the art may be used. It is preferred that one member of the connecting means 24 be attached to the distal end of the first band and the other member of the connecting means 24 be attached to the distal end of the second band 20. This does not preclude the connecting means 24 being disposed intermediately in one of the bands 18, 20. FIG. 11 shows the tracheostomy tube 10 of FIG. 10 mounted on a supine patient with the connecting means 24 in a disconnected position. Pushing the two members together to connect the members is accomplished very rapidly without moving the cannula 12 and with no discomfort to the patient.